

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:
 - supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;
 - bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;
 - applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;
 - withdrawing the backing layer; and
 - causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,
 - wherein the varnish layer and the decoration layer both remain on an external surface of the article after the transfer,
 - wherein the varnish used is a UV thermal varnish,
 - and wherein pre-curing of the varnish is ~~partially cured~~ initiated by exposure to heat prior to the transfer.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish used is a cationic UV thermal varnish.
4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish used is a hydroxylated urethane acrylate UV thermal varnish.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish includes oligomers of low molecular weight.
6. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish contains a solvent prior to being applied to the backing layer.
7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish includes at least one of a pigment or a dye.
8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish includes photo-initiators at a concentration by weight that lies in the range from about 0.3% to about 3%.
9. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the backing layer comprises a polyester film.
10. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the decoration layer is covered in a layer of hot-melt adhesive.
11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the varnish layer is exposed to said radiation while temperature thereof is still close to maximum temperature thereof at the moment when pressure and heat are applied to the backing layer, the temperature difference being less than 30% of the maximum temperature.
12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of metal.
13. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of ink deposited by printing on the layer of varnish before the varnish is exposed to said radiation.
14. (Withdrawn) A multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under an effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being

situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer, wherein the varnish used is a UV thermal varnish.

15. (Withdrawn) A multilayer structure for implementing a hot marking method, the structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, said varnish being unexposed to said radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration suitable for being transferred locally onto an article by applying heat and pressure to the backing layer, the varnish used being a UV thermal varnish.

16. (Withdrawn) A multilayer structure according to claim 15, wherein the decoration layer is covered in a layer of hot-melt adhesive.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Withdrawn) A multilayer structure according to claim 16, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of vacuum-deposited metal.

19. (Withdrawn) A multilayer structure according to claim 15, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of ink deposited by printing.

20. (Withdrawn) An article having decoration applied thereto by a hot marking method as defined in claim 1.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 8, wherein the varnish includes photo-initiators at a concentration by weight of about 0.5%.

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5, wherein the oligomers have molecular weight lying in a range from about 800 to about 2000.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article.

25. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the article is made out of plastics material.

26. (Currently Amended) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:
- supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;
 - bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;
 - applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;
 - withdrawing the backing layer; and
 - causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,
- wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article,
- wherein the varnish used is a UV thermal varnish;
- and wherein pre-curing of the varnish is ~~partially cured~~ initiated by exposure to heat prior to the transfer.
27. (Canceled)
28. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish used is a cationic UV thermal varnish.
29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish used is a hydroxylated urethane acrylate UV thermal varnish.
30. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish includes oligomers of low molecular weight.
31. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish contains a solvent prior to being applied to the backing layer.

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish includes at least one of a pigment or a dye.

33. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish includes photo-initiators at a concentration by weight that lies in the range from about 0.3% to about 3%.

34. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the backing layer comprises a polyester film.

35. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the decoration layer is covered in a layer of hot-melt adhesive.

36. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the varnish layer is exposed to said radiation while temperature thereof is still close to maximum temperature thereof at the moment when pressure and heat are applied to the backing layer, the temperature difference being less than 30% of the maximum temperature.

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of metal.

38. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of ink deposited by printing on the layer of varnish before the varnish is exposed to said radiation.

39. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 33, wherein the varnish includes photo-initiators at a concentration by weight of about 0.5%.

40. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 30, wherein the oligomers have molecular weight lying in a range from about 800 to about 2000.

41. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein the article is made out of plastics material.

42. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein a gilding iron having portions in relief corresponding to the pattern to be made is used to apply pressure and heat to the backing layer.

43. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 26, wherein a gilding iron having portions in relief corresponding to the pattern to be made is used to apply pressure and heat to the backing layer.

44. (Previously Presented) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

withdrawing the backing layer; and

causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the varnish layer and the decoration layer both remain on an external surface of the article after the transfer, and wherein the varnish layer is exposed to said radiation while temperature thereof is still close to maximum temperature thereof at time when pressure and heat are applied to the backing layer, a temperature difference between the temperature and the maximum temperature being less than 30% of the maximum temperature.

45. (Previously Presented) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

withdrawing the backing layer; and

causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article, and wherein the varnish layer is exposed to said radiation while temperature thereof is still close to maximum temperature thereof at time when pressure and heat are applied to the backing layer, a temperature difference between the temperature and the maximum temperature being less than 30% of the maximum temperature.

46. (Previously Presented) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

withdrawing the backing layer; and

causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the varnish layer and the decoration layer both remain on an external surface of the article after the transfer, and wherein the varnish comprises oligomers of low molecular weight.

47. (Previously Presented) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

withdrawing the backing layer; and

causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article, and wherein the varnish comprises oligomers of low molecular weight.

48. (Withdrawn) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

withdrawing the backing layer; and

causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the varnish layer and the decoration layer both remain on an external surface of the article after the transfer, and wherein said structure comprises at least one layer of varnish that is colored.

49. (Withdrawn) A hot marking method enabling decoration to be made on an article, comprising:

supplying a multilayer structure comprising a layer of varnish that hardens under the effect of radiation, a backing layer, and a layer of decoration, the varnish layer being situated between the backing layer and the decoration layer;

bringing said multilayer structure into contact with the article;

applying pressure and heat to the backing layer at a location where it is desired to transfer the decoration layer onto the article, the varnish layer being transferred locally onto the article together with the decoration layer;

withdrawing the backing layer; and

causing the layer of varnish that has been transferred onto the article to harden by exposing it to said radiation,

wherein the decoration layer remains coherent after the transfer on the article, and wherein said structure comprises at least one layer of varnish that is colored.

50. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 48, wherein the colored varnish layer is yellow so as to imitate gold.

51. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 48, wherein the colored varnish layer has dyes or pigments used for coloring the varnish layer and photo initiators contained therein which have absorption peaks at different wavelengths.

52. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 48, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of metal.

53. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 49, wherein the colored varnish layer is yellow so as to imitate gold.

54. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 49, wherein the colored varnish layer has dyes or pigments used for coloring the varnish layer and photo initiators contained therein which have absorption peaks at different wavelengths.

55. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 49, wherein the decoration layer is a layer of metal.

56. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12, wherein the layer of metal is deposited under a vacuum onto the layer of varnish before the varnish is exposed to said radiation.

57. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 37, wherein the layer of metal is deposited under a vacuum onto the layer of varnish before the varnish is exposed to said radiation.

58. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 44, wherein the varnish is partially cured by exposure to heat prior to the transfer.

59. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 45, wherein the varnish is partially cured by exposure to heat prior to the transfer.

60. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 46, wherein the varnish is partially cured by exposure to heat prior to the transfer.

61. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 47, wherein the varnish is partially cured by exposure to heat prior to the transfer.